



Written by [Gary Benoit](#) on July 16, 2014

Our New “Freedom Index”: Rating Congress Based on the Constitution

Do you know how your U.S. representative and senators vote on key issues? Do you know if their actual voting records conform to their rhetoric — or to the U.S. Constitution?

The New American’s “Freedom Index,” published four times every two-year congressional term, rates congressmen based on their adherence to constitutional principles of limited government, fiscal responsibility, national sovereignty, and a traditional foreign policy of avoiding foreign entanglements. Each index shows how every member of the House and Senate voted on 10 keys issues.



Our third Freedom Index for the current Congress, appearing in the July 28 print edition of *TNA*, includes such important issues as the bloated federal budget, the “temporary” suspension of the federal debt limit, farm and food programs, U.S. aid to Ukraine, indefinite military detention (House only), EPA regulations (House), Janet Yellen’s nomination to the Federal Reserve (Senate), and the minimum wage (Senate).

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Please check out this index to see how your own representative and senators voted. ([Click here](#) for the PDF.) The index not only provides a percentage score for each congressman, but also shows how each congressman voted on each of the 10 key votes.

How well did your own representative and senators do in our newest congressional scorecard on particular issues as well as overall? How well did Congress as a whole do? Are the ratings what you would have expected?

Of course, considering that every federal lawmaker takes an oath to uphold the Constitution, it would not be unreasonable to expect members of Congress to score 100 percent — or at least close to it. Yet in our newest index, as has been the case in the past, most congressmen earned failing grades. In the House, where seven representatives earned 100 percent, the average score was a dismal 39 percent. In the Senate, where not a single member mustered a perfect score, the average score was an even more dismal 28 percent.

Congressmen may claim that they are upholding their oaths of office during their tenure, but their voting records belie their claims — with relatively few exceptions.

The New American encourages readers to familiarize themselves with their congressmen’s voting records, to contact their congressmen urging them to abide by their oaths of office, and (when appropriate) to commend them for their fidelity to the Constitution.



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In addition to the PDF mentioned above, The New American also publishes an [online version of the Freedom Index](#) that includes votes for current and past congressmen going back to 1999.



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